

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A striking personality has passed away. Professor Tyndall is dead—dead under circumstances of the most tragic pathos, with which we have nothing to do further than to record our profound sympathy with the innocent cause of the tragedy. For us the late Professor Tyndall was interesting in another way; he it was who made use of the harshest expressions with regard to Spiritualism that have ever been employed. Notwithstanding which the thing has gone on, and Psychism, which is the outcome of Spiritualism, is the most prevalent factor of the world's thought at the present day.

How curious it is to look back over twenty years, when to the outer Philistine there were but two scientific men, Huxley and Tyndall, and to note the faint praise with which Tyndall has been treated by that Press which would have been obsequious to his least word two decades ago. Even the unthinking have got to know more, and to recognise that the greatest men are not those who are always prominently before the world. Tyndall was pre-eminently a populariser of the work of others, an excellent thing to be, but not one which entitled him to the place once so readily accorded him as final judge in all matters scientific, especially when questions of psychic interest were to the fore. Another evidence that the "vox populi" is not necessarily the "vox Dei."

In connection with the miraculous statue of Melhalla, an account of which was given in last week's "LIGHT," it may be interesting to refer to some legends of a similar kind. In the "Exemplar of Jacques de Vitry," published by the Folk-lore Society, we find this:—

A man lost all his property at dice, and began to blaspheme God and invoke the devil. He applied to a wealthy Jew, who said to him: "Deny Christ, his Mother, and the saints, and I will cause you to enjoy your former pleasures." The gamester professed his willingness to deny God and the saints but not the Virgin, and the Jew drove him angrily away. One day, as he was passing before an image of the Virgin it bowed to him, as if thanking him. A rich man who was in the church saw this, and when it occurred a second time he called the gamester, who was in rags and looked a ribald fellow, and asked him what that wonder meant. He answered: "I do not know, for I am a great sinner and have wasted my patrimony in riotous living and gaming." "How can that be?" asked the rich man. "Did you ever do the Blessed Mary a service?" He replied: "I have never served God or her," and then remembering, he added: "A certain Jew wanted to enrich me if I would deny the Blessed Mary, but I preferred to remain poor to denying her." The rich man was deeply moved, and said: "You did well," and gave him his daughter and great wealth with her hand.

Of this story, moreover, there are many variants. In one of these, given by Caesar of Heisterbach, the Virgin

intercedes with her Son, and his image turns away its face. Finally the Virgin lays the image on the altar and falls on her knees before it, when her prayer is granted. Jacques de Vitry lived in the twelfth century.

The "miraculous" had not at that time been derided into "superstition," and the old chroniclers had plenty of such stories. Here is another, also from Jacques de Vitry:—

St. Ambrose tells of a virgin who was hastening to martyrdom, and was asked by a pagan whither she was going. She answered: "To my friend, who has invited me to his wedding feast." The pagan, deriding her, said: "Tell your friend to send me some of his roses." Shortly after her death a handsome youth, with a basket full of beautiful roses, appeared to the pagan, and said: "The friend of the woman who just passed by sends you some roses as you desired." Then he left the roses and disappeared. The pagan was converted and himself suffered martyrdom.

A story illustrating the condition of earth-bound spirits comes from York. Some people had been holding seances in a family all whose members are more or less mediumistic. The writer says:—

When Mrs. S. (the medium) was coming downstairs in the morning I heard her saying, "Come, friend, it is long since you passed out of the body, do you not wish to go into a brighter sphere?" I asked her who it was. She said a queer old man had come into the bedroom that night, and walked once or twice across the room, then came to the bedside and said: "You can stay all night. I told t'other woman so, but it's my house." "T'other woman" was a lady sleeping in the same room. Mrs. S. said: "Well, friend, you must go now," for the man had spoken so that the other occupant of the room could hear him, and she was frightened. So the man was sent away. On the next morning, as she came downstairs, Mrs. S. spoke to him as above, when he said: "No! I'se in me own house, and I can't be better, I'se all right." He was turning round again to go into the bedroom, but Mrs. S. spoke with authority, saying, "You must not go into that room, you will make the lady ill," when the answer given was, "Then you come with me, I live in t' garret."

We give this almost exactly in the words of the letter, which contains much more; but unfortunately there does not appear to have been that carefulness as to investigation which there should have been. "Robbie Burns" was, for example, at once taken for granted. The above story, however, has a considerable air of *vraisemblance*, and we give it for what it is worth.

A correspondent complains that Mr. Emmette Coleman's letter was printed. It seems that our Theosophist friends do not quite realise the position. If they would confine their claims to recognition on the ground of the introduction into Europe of the wisdom-religion of the East, all would be well. But they have founded their claims on the semi-divinity of Madame Blavatsky, and therefore have no right of complaint if that semi-divinity is attacked.

Faith, like love, is the appropriate exchange of one soul and spirit with another.

WOMAN AND NATURAL SELECTION.

Alfred Russel Wallace has been interviewed by a representative of the "Daily Chronicle" on the question of the future influence of woman on the race. Mr. Wallace hopes much from this future, and he finds his hope upon the principle of the survival of the fittest. It is just a little odd to observe Mr. Wallace answering his inquisitor from the material or quasi-material standpoint, and one cannot help wondering whether he felt that he was in a way translating spiritual meanings into material forms. For a beautiful body ought to mean the possession of an equally beautiful spiritual part. Speaking of the improvement of the race generally, Mr. Wallace says:—

I believe that this improvement will be effected through the agency of female choice in marriage. As things are, women are constantly forced into marriage for a bare living or a comfortable home. They have practically no choice in the selection of their partners and the fathers of their children, and so long as this economic necessity for marriage presses upon the great bulk of women, men who are vicious, degraded, of feeble intellect and unsound bodies, will secure wives, and thus often perpetuate their infirmities and evil habits. But in a reformed society the vicious man, the man of degraded taste or of feeble intellect, will have little chance of finding a wife, and his bad qualities will die out with himself. On the other hand, the most perfect and beautiful in body and mind, the men of spotless character and reputation, will secure wives first, the less commendable later, and the least commendable latest of all. As a natural consequence, the best men and women will marry the earliest, and probably have the largest families. The result will be a more rapid increase of the good than of the bad, and this state of things continuing to work for successive generations, will at length bring the average man up to the level of those who are now the more advanced of the race.

One cannot help feeling that Mr. Wallace is very largely right, but how are the spotless character and the perfect and beautiful body to be got "together"? And what is a spotless character? The spiritual element seems here to have been a little lost sight of by Mr. Wallace, for if it be admitted, the passage quoted means the gradual elimination of the evil influences surrounding us by the material process of natural selection. But that does not seem to be intended, and so the difficulty of the gradual improvement of the race spiritually is not touched by the principles of selection and of the survival of the fittest.

Mr. Wallace anticipates that woman will have a far greater choice as to marriage than hitherto, for he says:—

On the whole, then, it is probable that in the society of the future the mortality of males will be less, owing to preventive measures in connection with dangerous and injurious occupations, so that the number of marriageable men will be equal to that of women; add to this that there will be an increasing proportion of women who will prefer not to marry, and it is clear that men desiring wives will be in excess of women wanting husbands. This will greatly increase the influence of women in the improvement of the race. Being in the minority, they will be more sought after, and will have a real choice in marriage, which is rarely the case now.

But even the interviewer seemed to see that Mr. Wallace was narrowing down rather seriously, for he asked if Mr. Wallace thought that the women would always choose wisely:—

Broadly speaking, I think we may trust the cultivated minds and pure instincts of the women of the future in the choice of partners. The idle and the selfish would be almost universally rejected. The coarse and sensual man, the diseased or the weak in intellect, those having a tendency to insanity or to hereditary disease, or who possess any congenital deformity, would rarely find partners, because the enlightened woman would know that she was committing an offence against society, against humanity at large, in choosing a husband who might be the means of transmitting disease of body or of mind to his offspring. Thus it will come about that the lower types of men, morally, and the physically diseased, will remain permanently unmarried, and will leave no descendants; and the advance of the race in every good quality will be ensured.

Now one would like to ask Mr. Wallace why he can trust the cultivated minds and pure instincts of the women of the future to reject the idle and the selfish. In fact, unless the progress of woman is to outstrip that of man, why are we to expect that there will still be idle and selfish men while there are no longer any idle and selfish women? At present there are at least as many of the latter class as of the former, and one hardly sees why their peculiar characteristics should disappear in the one case and not in the other. But surely the spiritual side of our humanity should count for something, and that does not appear in Mr. Wallace's estimate of the future. And indeed, we say at once that the future of the race depends quite as much on the higher development of man as independent of woman, as it does on that of woman herself. Men may stretch out their hands to God as much as women, and they will—despite all the wire-drawings and surmises suggested by the advocates of natural selection.

SOME BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

Another of those richly got up treatises on Alchemy which Messrs. J. Elliott & Co. have made their own has been issued by that firm. This time it is "The New Pearl of Great Price." Mr. Arthur Edward Waite is the Editor. The work itself is an abridgement of an abridgement. The original, by Bonus of Ferrara, was abridged by Janus Lacinus, and Mr. Waite has again abridged the latter. Mr. Waite tells us in his preface that the original is one of the earliest works printed on Alchemy, and that it is a very clear, methodical, and well-reasoned treatise, comparing favourably in these respects with the bulk of alchemical literature. The book will be useful to students of Alchemy, there can be no doubt, but to the unlearned in that mysterious art this work, like all others, looks a little formidable. To Mr. Waite the editing of these handsome volumes is evidently a labour of love.

The "Elements of Hypnotism,"[†] by R. Harry Vincent, has also been sent us. At a first glance the work appears to be of considerable value, but considering the importance of the subject we must postpone the consideration of it for the moment.

Of magazines, the "Pall Mall Magazine" is now from many points of view easily first. There is a subtle but well understood distinction between a magazine and a review, of which we are all cognisant though perhaps it is not easy to explain. There is a certain seriousness in the one which we do not necessarily look for in the other, though the magazine and review run one into the other very much in these days. Of all that is best in magazine literature we find very much in the "Pall Mall," and the Christmas number is no exception. The coloured frontispiece is especially pretty, and there is a delightful ghost story, "The Mystery of the Hacienda," in which Bret Harte has used some of the new psychology with delicate touch which leaves little to be desired.

The "Idler" is the Idler still, just what its name implies, a pleasant, gossipy monthly—valuable, moreover, in its way, for it is a relief to turn to its pages at times when jaded with more serious work. The December number contains a story called "A Condensed Ghost," which is not good, and the genesis of which it is difficult to imagine. There is a wood cut of the old-fashioned ghost which is not inspiring.

We have also received the following, all of which will be noticed in due course. "A Book of Strange Sins," by Coulton Kernahan; "Two and Two Make Four," the Christmas number of the energetic editor of the "Review of Reviews"; the "Autobiography of Annie Besant," a sumptuous volume; and "Collectanea Hermetica," by W. Wynn Westcott, M.B.

PREJUDICES are notions or opinions which the mind entertains without knowing the grounds and reasons of them.—ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

THERE is a mystic craving in the great to become the lone captive of the small, while the small has a corresponding thirst for the enthralment of the great.—COVENTRY PATMORE.

* "The New Pearl of Great Price." A Treatise concerning the Treasure and most Precious Stone of the Philosophers. (London: James Elliott and Co., Temple Chambers, Falcon-court, Fleet-street, 1894.)

† "The Elements of Hypnotism." By R. HARRY VINCENT. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co., Limited; or from Office of "List Price 6s."

AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW OF RE-INCARNATION.

II.

SENSATION TRANSMUTED TO ASTRAL-MIND : PERSONALITY.

Another key to the problem of Re-incarnation may possibly be found in alchemy.

Every atom of substance, of life energy, accreted by and into our organisms has passed through a multitude of re-incarnations in the four lower kingdoms of nature: gaseous, mineral, vegetable, animal, before being built into the human body. "For the soul passeth from form to form," says the Hermetic gnosis; "on the walls of thy temple are the forms of every creature, every beast of the earth and fowl of the air. All these are thy kingdom; they are the chambers of ordeal and houses of initiation of the soul." But this must refer to the pilgrimage of the material life, or substance, through the lower kingdoms, till it is integrated into the astral soul of man and there transmuted.

In each incarnation of these atoms of life, in the variety of forms, in the several kingdoms through which they have passed, there has been an interchange of quality and reaction, between the atoms of life and the unitary principle of the form, in which they were integral units for the time. The subconscious experiences of the four lower kingdoms, associated in our organisms, must therefore be vast indeed. But the specific life quality, or energy, of these lives is not only given up to the "organised corporeity into which it enters by conversion" in man, it is there alchemically transmuted.

Every differentiated atom of life carries inherently the four modes of consciousness previously referred to, with their related modes of objectivity, or nature. These modes of nature are reflected according to the mode of consciousness expressing itself, and in relation thereto. Matter is the most external mode of objectivity of life. The inner deeper natures of substance are unfolded therein, or nature is brought into a higher mode, by the transmuting influence of spirit; and substance is brought into contact with this transmuting energy in the organism of man. We see in nature that it is by assimilation by a proximately superior organic grade of life, that a relatively inferior mode is raised in degree, or converted. Thus the unitary principle of the plant, or plant idea, converts the life as mineral by integrating it to its higher mode. The animal-idea again converts the plant life to a relatively superior degree. Animal life is distilled and converted when integrated in man's organism and brought there in contact with the human principle.

The idea of the plant, or animal, must not be confounded with the form of the plant, or animal. The unitary principle giving form to the plant or animal, is an idea emanating from the Universal Mind. It is not of the same degree and is totally distinct from the human principle. Plant and animal ideas never evolve into human ideas or entities, though the substance of the plant and animal forms evolves into human forms and gradually, indeed, is integrated into angel forms. It will be seen later that animal and plant ideas are descending ideas, reflected in correspondent and correlated modes into objective representation on the physical plane. Man is a Divine idea, on the ascending scale.

All these ascending conversions of substance, till man is reached, have been on one plane, in one continuous degree. In whatever form of life, or order of nature, the life has been integrated and converted, it has remained in the plane of sensation. When integrated into man, however, and brought thereby into contact with the radiation of the spirit-Ego within him, the astral degree of this life is unfolded, carrying mind as its mode of consciousness: the digestive, ratiocinative mind and executive function, but not the self-consciousness which contains and cognises perception.

But this law under which the life of substance is re-incarnated and transmigrates from kingdom to kingdom, by being converted or transmuted, does not apply to the spirit-Ego which builds up the human organism we know as man. This descends no lower than the vital bridge, the astral mind of man, where it comes in contact with the life that has transmigrated through all the manifold forms of nature. In consequence of its presence there, that which has successively been gaseous life, mineral life, plant life, animal life, in sensation mode, becomes transmuted into its astral (mind) mode. It is, therefore, the life of substance which re-incarnates and transmigrates, and not the

spirit-Ego, which is impelled by the one determinator, from the source of Being, descending on an outward curve, from subjective states into external manifestation and returning on the re-ascending curve into the comparatively subjective states (but which have their related objectivity) whence it issued having gained individuality, knowledge of self-hood, form; enriched with the experiences attained in the circuit traversed, and having contributed to the evolution of the universe, by serving as the means of transmuting and evolving substance on its path.

Substance is a term which is used in Occultism to connote the objective aspect, the nature mode, of spirit or life. The reality of substance is not its subjectivity merely, as says transcendental philosophy, but the life inherent therein. It is Life which is the Universal element, the Ultimate Reality, the subjective identity that unifies objectivity and subjectivity, that identifies knowing and being. It is Life, which, by its self-opposing relations in particularity, presents itself to itself therein, and identifies itself in knowing, thought, experience. Consciousness is its self-inherent mode; the result of its reactions in itself as universal, with itself as particulars; of its representations of itself as objectivity, to itself as subjectivity. It presents itself as phenomena and identifies itself as knowledge.

As Universal, static, undeterminate, unchangeable, it can have no expression. No experience is possible, apart from differentiation. Therefore Life determines itself into particularity for self-realisation; and manifests in process, and thereby becomes self-conscious. As self-conscious, it finds itself as World, within itself as knowing. It gives itself away as units, as particulars, and finds itself again, expanded in selfhood. Man is the focal point in which life becomes self-conscious; through which life presents itself to itself in mutual self-opposition and self-reference; so also is man the focus, through which life descends into matter and matter re-ascends into spirit. But man is only one in the chain of such focal points which connect life in its homogeneous, diffuse aspect, with life in its concrete aspect as matter, and through which life descends and ascends; all such foci being (like man) living entities. The whole field of Being-in-experience, or of manifestation, in its various modes and planes, occurs by the interplay or interaction of life, self-particularised, within these two poles or aspects of Universal Being. Both these poles, or states, are equally necessary in the process of manifestation, and between these poles are the intermediary planes, or modes, previously referred to. The process of manifestation proceeds in a circuit between these two poles, and, like that of electricity, is continuous, without retrocession on itself; implying a departure from the positive element which gives out; a procession to the negative pole, and return thence to its source. This law of Universal Being has its correlated expression in every unit of Being, man included. The unit is a focal reflection of the laws operating in the greater Universe. Life in the greater Universe descends and reascends from spirit to matter, returning from matter to spirit, and this through the four planes or modes of Being. The same process must occur in the unit of Being. The knowledge of this process by which life descends in the unit from higher modes to the lower, and may be made to return again to the higher in the unit, instead of flowing out, is the Hermetic arcanum, and the application of this knowledge is the Hermetic art. It consists, says an alchemist, in "the right disposition and manipulation of the undetermined subject; then amalgamation, distillation, filtration, digestion, and sublimation to the head, where it is established in a new and concentric form of Light."

It is admitted that physical life depends upon light; that this has a vivifying effect. Occultism teaches that light is the external vehicle of life, that the two are inseparable. It is also admitted that light proceeds from the sun, and it is partially recognised that life proceeds from the sun. It is a maxim in Occultism that law is universal in its application, but has correlated modes of expression, in different planes. Hence if light and life are transmitted between planetary units of Being, it would follow occultly that they are also transmitted between living, conscious units of Being, or entities, which confirms the proposition previously illustrated, that life is transmitted by and through living entities. It is living entities on suns, planets, and in intermediary planes, who serve as the foci for the transmission of life from plane to plane, and it is by its passage through such living foci that life is modified in its mode, and becomes related to the successive planes, both on the descending and ascending circuits.

As diffuse and undifferentiate, while containing the potentiality of all qualities, Life can manifest no qualities, that being only possible in relation with particulars. It is by its passage through these living, conscious foci that it takes on quality, that quality being imparted by itself to itself. Such quality reacts on the succeeding link in the chain of reception and transmission, where again additional quality is imparted and again transmitted to the succeeding receiving focus, and thus through the chain of links, or reflecting foci, between the one source of Being, life Universal, and the opposite pole, matter.

As in the electrical circuit, so in the circuit of life; from the negative pole of matter, life has to return to its source; and here again it is living vehicles who form the links of reception and transmission, as of transmuting potency, by which life is converted to the mode of the next proximate plane; where it is received, transmuted in mode, and transmitted to the successively higher mode; until the circuit is complete and it returns to the source whence it emanated: Life Universal in its spirit mode.

This process in life Universal has its parallel in the process of individual becoming. The unit of Being is polarised; nucleated from life diffuse, by the action of the Elohim, man's divine, angelic parents. Polarising entails the "inducing" of positive and negative, or masculine and feminine, elements. This in Occultism signifies also the equivalent modes of light and heat, which again have spiritual correlatives in thought and love. It is the nucleating of these two spiritual qualities in association with life inherently polarised, or nucleated thereby, that entails the possibility of self-consciousness. The process by which the elemental spirit-nuclaid becomes, as fulfilment, a dual angel, in traversing the circuit of manifestation, was superficially indicated in a previous letter.

It is life that is Professor Green's "infinite and eternal energy, whose essence it is (not to be, but) to become self-conscious." As Universal, as ground, it is conscious, but becomes self-conscious by particularisation. It is that which knows (the Knower), but it can only know itself when in union with some element contradistinguished from itself, viz., in particularisation. As infinite, it can manifest no qualities, such being only possible in connection with relations. But it acquires qualities in its process of descent through vehicles, in the intermediary states and planes, and reflects or manifests these qualities to our cognition, in re-presentation. Those intermediary vehicles are living entities, and the qualities presented to us in reflection are those imparted to the life during its sojourn in, and in passing through, those entities, by the radiation of their thoughts. It is such thought qualities, with which the life we inbreathes has thus been impregnated, that reflect and represent themselves to our cognition from within. Life itself remains the common element; the element of identity; the Universal; presenting inherently the possibility of different modes of sub-consciousness and stages of self-consciousness.

This theory will no doubt be considered a very strange one to advance. Yet it cannot be disputed that life distilled from lower, or ascending, modes carries qualities which entail very palpable reactions on man's thought and conduct. The life quality expressed by vegetarian races certainly differs from that expressed by meat eaters. The manifestation through man of grape-juice attributes is very different from the expression carried by poppy-juice. The reaction of minerals on man is well known. Yet unless there were an element of identity between human life and those substances, they could have no effect on human life. Our knowledge of the effect of life ascending from lower modes, shows that it carries qualities which react upon, and express themselves through, human life. Then equally so may it be possible, that life descending from higher modes may also carry qualities which manifest through man. It is recognised that the objective aspect of the ascending life manifests in our organism. Equally so must the descending life reflect its objectivity through us. Hence is it true that as a man thinks, so is he; and that not only in an abstract sense, but in a concrete sense as well.

QUESTOR VITE.

DOWN on their knees they fell—the man who long
Had seemed the singer of an idle song,
Aroused at last to his own want, and theirs,
With passionate entreaty led their prayers:
And many wept in silence, many felt
The ice about their hearts begin to melt;
To priest and people, ere the Christmas morn,
A Saviour was revealed, a Christ was born.

—C. J. BLAKE.

SPIRITUALISM IN BARROW-IN-FURNESS.

THE DESIGNING, ERECTION, AND OPENING OF A NEW SPIRITUAL HALL IN BARROW-IN-FURNESS.

Account of the Plan of Building, condensed from Statement, furnished by a Barrow Friend to Mrs. E. H. Britten.

Some two years ago Mr. Procter, the blind medium of Barrow, who for many years past has devoted his life and mediumship—in public addresses and other services—to the cause of Spiritualism in that section of country, when standing on a certain piece of waste ground (almost in the centre of the town) with a friend, said, "I am impressed beyond a shadow of doubt that this spot will eventually be the site of the Spiritual Hall we have so long been anxious to build and call our own."

This prophecy appeared at the time of its utterance a mere phantasy. The site in question was in the middle of a large town, and far too valuable to justify the expectation that it could ever be possessed by the notoriously poor Spiritualists.

Many believers in the noble truths of Spiritualism were to be found in Barrow, but, partly, perhaps, from its being the end of a railway line—the jumping-off place, as it might be called, of England into the Irish Sea—and from other causes, all too familiar to the promoters of a new and unpopular faith, the believers in high places in Barrow, and those with most abundant means, generally left the believers in low places, and with no means at all, to shift for themselves. Convenient halls, as usual, were few, and invariably closed against "those obnoxious Spiritualists."

When I myself first lectured at Barrow, the cosmopolitan but very expensive Town Hall was engaged for my services, and its hire far transcended the means of the working men and women of the cause to engage again.

A hall had to be built, that was inevitable. First then whence could come the means? These were nobly, and all un-hoped for lent—by a good man, a worker himself, God bless him!—Mr. Priest, a photographer of Furness—an excellent one too, as the pictures hereafter to be named will prove. Next for the site. At least a dozen out-of-the-way places were tried and failed. Next came a vague, desperate effort to buy the same waste piece of land before alluded to in the centre of the town, two minutes' walk from the Central Railway Station. The bargain was successfully closed; and on the 25th of last July only, the foundation stones of the new hall were laid. This was the exact spot upon which Mr. Procter, the blind medium, had stood two years before and predicted the forthcoming erection—the place where he himself laid one of the first stones.

With a promptitude and energy beyond all praise or precedent, the builders worked as seldom men worked before. They remembered a few words I had spoken in half earnest some two years ago, namely, that if they would build a hall I would come and open it for them, and they wrote to claim my promise as their work proceeded. Again and again I put aside other engagements to keep faith with them, and on Saturday, November 18th of this year, I entered the town for the purpose of dedicating the hall with five services. The good, the true, the deeply self-sacrificing builders at my request have sent me a complete description of the building, its dimensions, and the character of its wood and stones; but as these would occupy several pages of uninteresting and mere technical details, I will condense them into space as limited as possible; but, considering that such space is asked for to represent the actions of working men and women whose toil—especially in these hard times—barely suffices to supply their means of provision from day to day, yet is cheerfully devoted in the attempt to give the world the noble religion they themselves fasten all their hopes here and hereafter upon, I do not think the Editors of "LIGHT" will grudge them a representation.

And it is through this far-away working people, with no other capital than a loan from Mr. Priest (himself a working man), that an undertaking has been carried forward, the report of which, if labelled with the name of any sectarian Christian association, would ring trumpet-tongued throughout the land. I shall now at once, therefore, proceed to summarise the scope of the

PSYCHOLOGICAL HALL.

Without entering into any minute and technical description of this building, I may confidently state that both within and without it is a neat, pleasant, and commodious structure.

consists chiefly of two halls, with separate entrances and good sized, appropriate ante-rooms. The lower hall on the ground floor is designed for the use of the children's Lyceum, or a tea, entertainment, or concert room. It is spacious, well seated, and well furnished. There are, besides the ante-room, a kitchen, cooking stove, back offices, and an ample supply of water, &c., &c. A wide and noble staircase leads from the vestibule of the second door, also by a passage from the Lyceum hall, up to the lecture room. This is a still finer, higher, but no less attractive hall than the ground floor room. It has a large gallery at one end over the entrance; a choir gallery at the other end, with a rostrum in front; and a well toned and powerful organ at the side. The hall is well ventilated, well warmed, comfortably seated, and capable, with the gallery, of accommodating about five hundred persons. There are also séance rooms; and the acoustic properties of the building as well as the lighting are excellent. And all this—complete as it is in every detail—has been begun and finished in less than four months.

After a thorough inspection of every part, I was so struck, and I might say delighted, with the excellence of all the arrangements, in which I could not find one thing lacking, that I queried who the excellent architect was who could have devised so complete an erection. In response they introduced to me my chairman of Sunday night, Mr. Cox, himself a builder, and one of the most earnest Spiritualists of the town.

I must close my part of this humble but just tribute to the energy, self-sacrifice, and genuine skill with which the Spiritualists of Barrow-in-Furness have practicalised their sense of the glorious revelation and religion of Spiritualism, by adding once more that the hall is in the centre of the town, at the corner of two most respectable streets. The door of the Lyceum lower hall opens into one street, that of the upper lecture hall into another.

The name of "Psychological Hall" is engraved on the outside, and a row of respectable houses adjoining the hall is in the course of erection on ground attached to the hall. To satisfy the good and grateful friends who solicit me to send these statements of their doings to "LIGHT," I now refer your readers, for an account of the opening services of this noble building, to the paper furnished by Mr. Holden, a commission agent of Barrow, only stipulating that I have excised some of the tributes offered to my own share in the proceedings.

EMMA H. BRITTEN.

OPENING SERVICE AT THE PSYCHOLOGICAL HALL, BARROW-IN-FURNESS, NOVEMBER 19TH, 1893.

On Sunday, November 19th, Psychological Hall was opened at 11 a.m. by Mrs. Hardinge Britten in a lecture entitled "The Second Coming of Christ," which was listened to by a large audience with rapt attention. At 6.30 Mrs. Britten gave another splendid lecture entitled, "The Temples of Men and the Temples of God." There was a fine audience, and Mrs. Britten's lecture surpassed anything we have ever heard before in Barrow.

On Monday, November 20th, at 6 p.m., there was a public tea, to which about 100 friends sat down, each one congratulating his neighbour on their great success, which made the repast very pleasant. Mesdames Priest, Wilson, W. Hopson, Z. Hopson, and Kellet, Miss Cox, Miss Peck, and Miss McIntyre presided at the tables, while Mrs. Stone, Mrs. Oakley and other ladies were busy providing. After tea there was a public meeting, with addresses, songs, solos, and recitations. Mrs. E. H. Britten addressed the meeting on "Mediumship and How to Develop it," and Mr. Procter on "The Rise and Progress of Spiritualism in Barrow." Miss Peck and Miss Cox gave two excellent recitations. Master and Miss Simkinson gave some songs, and Miss E. Tranter accompanied on the organ. The most pleasing part of the programme was the presentation of two large photographs, finely framed, the one of Mrs. Britten and her famous bird "Australian Joe"—enlarged by Mr. Priest, the photographer, from a small cabinet picture, and presented by her friends at Barrow; and the other, the photograph of Mr. and Mrs. Crellin, who were the founders of the Barrow Society some nineteen years ago, and who sat with Mr. Procter during the early part of his development. The photographs were beautiful and life-like pictures. They were bromides got up by Brother S. J. Priest, who is certainly one of the best photographers in the North of England. Mrs. Britten, when rising to thank the people, said she was so much surprised, and the gift was so unexpected, that she could not find words to express her heart-felt gratitude. When Mr. Procter presented to Mr. Cox the picture of his father and mother, his eyes were filled with tears, and the deep feeling of love to the two Old Pioneers was manifested both by the chairman and the congregation. The evening meeting concluded with the usual votes of thanks.

On Tuesday night, Mrs. E. H. Britten gave her lecture entitled "Leaves from the Lives of our Pioneers," or Readings from her great "Encyclopaedia," the chair being taken by Councillor Howitson.

Mrs. Britten read with deep feeling the touching and wonderful history of "John Clarke" from her forthcoming "Spiritual Encyclopaedia," to the delight and profound interest of every listener.

On Wednesday evening Mrs. Britten gave her popular lecture on "The Cause and Cure of Crime and Poverty," answering a large number of questions from the audience at its close. The chair was taken and many laudatory remarks were made by the well-known and respected Poor-law Commissioner of Barrow, &c., Mr. Swindlehurst.

Many good addresses were also made by the resident speakers, and by the indefatigable blind medium of Barrow—blind to the things of sense, but more than commonly awake to the duties and possibilities of life here and the results hereafter.

Mr. Procter, though filling up every possible gap in the cause of Barrow Spiritualism, is such an excellently inspired speaker that he should be heard from every platform in the country. We must close with renewed grateful acknowledgments for all the invaluable aid we have had from mortals and spirits, and an earnest prayer for future blessings on our great undertaking.

A VERIFIED PREDICTION.

The account given below is from the "Relgio-Philosophical Journal" for November 25th:—

During the year 1891 I was very ill, suffering from an organic trouble. The best medical skill advised no operation, for fear of unfavourable results. For years I had been experimenting, trying to explain certain occurrences. I had come to the conclusion that all the knowledge obtained by me in dreams was thought-transference from the living. During this illness, while awake, I had a number of visions, and on the night of December 4th, 1891, at a time when I was so ill that I was almost unconscious of my whereabouts, my sister, who had passed out of the body in 1886, seemed to come to me, and with her I went to some far away place. She showed me a number of men in a room, where there were tea, coffee, biscuit and bread. She said, "I have brought you to this place in order to prove to you that it is not thought-transference, also to tell you that you will not die, but will live to go to Chicago, to the World's Fair." She called my attention particularly to two men whom she said I would see in Chicago. One was packing in a large crate some exquisite china of a rare old blue, very like a pitcher familiar to us both from childhood. He said these were to be shipped to Chicago and I would see them. My sister told me I would find these men in the Vienna Café, and the shorter, darker man, who had a moustache, would tell me where to find the dishes. He gave me his name, but before I could take note of it I had forgotten it.

I sent an account of this vision to Dr. Richard Hodgson, of the Society for Psychical Research, at the time of the vision. Nine months later I survived the operation, which was one of the most critical on record, and after many ups and downs recovered sufficiently to be able in August to visit the Fair. My first thought on reaching the grounds was to find the blue china and verify my experience. I went first to the Vienna Café on the Midway Plaisance. The place did not look familiar, neither did I see the men. I inquired if there were not another Vienna Café. I was told there was a restaurant in Old Vienna. The place was not what I expected, but after I had looked around a little, I saw one of the men I had seen in my dream nearly two years before filling orders at a desk. All the dishes I saw were white, so I went up to him and asked if he knew of any blue ones either there or in the grounds which had been brought from Vienna. He referred me to another man, who was the second man of my dream. He not only told me where I would find the china, but the name of the man in charge of the exhibit in the Manufactures Building. Intensely interested, I went to the building designated and found the lovely china as I had seen it so long before. There were only four or five pieces, like an old-fashioned cologne set, and were valued at about fifty dollars. Neither of the cafés was like the one seen in my dream or vision, and my theory is that I saw some place in Vienna. The curious part of the whole matter, aside from the fact of my finding the men, is that I did live and go to Chicago to the Fair, a fact that no one, even my physicians, could decide at that time. Who told me? And why is it that the so-called dead always seem to accompany us in dreams?

B. B.

DENY that nature can be interfered with, and you leave nothing higher than nature. You make it supreme and self-contained.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT."
2, DUKE STREET.
ADELPHI, LONDON, W.C.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

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Light:

EDITED BY "M.A., LOND."

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16th, 1893.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, London, W.C. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, London, W.C., and not to the Editor.

AT THE PALAIS BOUREON.

A short time ago we said a few words in "LIGHT" about Anarchy. Since then there have been here and there evidences more or less pronounced that this latest outcome of our "civilisation" is still to the fore, but nothing very serious had been manifested until the bomb-throwing at the Palais Bourbon on Saturday last. Into the midst of the representatives of the people of the second greatest republic of the world there was thrown an instrument of destruction, for no other reason, as the thrower avowed, than that he was tired of "this society of comfort and ease." For that is what *bourgeoisie* really means in this connection—he was weary of *la société bourgeoisie*. This would-be destroyer, for that is what he is, had deserted his wife and children, had been in prison for theft, and had generally been idle and reckless. To say that he was mad and shrug one's shoulders is not quite wise, though that is what many will do, and are doing. Vaillant is, indeed, nothing in himself, and whether to kill him or to imprison him is of itself a question of little moment; but once again let us recognise the fact that he is, even though he be the very scum of it all, only the exponent of the seething mass of revolt against the complacent optimism which has grown out of a false and unspiritual Christianity. It is no use shutting our eyes, the facts are there.

Vaillant and his co-workers—if such a term can be used of destroyers—are the exponents, who have come to the front, of that underlying evil which materialism in its various forms has, while apparently smothering, fostered and cherished. Such people are not necessarily bad in themselves, they are nothing but emanations, ghastly emanations, of evil which have at last found their way into the external world. To wreak vengeance on Vaillant and his compeers is as silly as to wreak vengeance on a tiger or a panther. You simply take from such beasts the power of doing further mischief. Only, when there are tigers and panthers about destroy their cover if you can; then they are not. And what is the cover of the Anarchist? It is the selfishness of the world around him.

In his inarticulate way Vaillant asserted his hatred of *la société bourgeoisie*. And *la société bourgeoisie* is the society of law and order as we know it. It is essentially that, for *la société aristocratique* and *la société proléttaire* are those which more constantly throw over the traces than the *société bourgeoisie*. It was therefore hatred of general law and order which Vaillant professed.

Once again, to talk of this as the raving of a madman is to talk nonsense. Vaillant is only one among many who have a sense of order in their own disorderliness. We must therefore go a little deeper down.

Evil agencies can only begin to work if there are loopholes for them to enter. If by any chance they enter into a man's conditions, the "Get behind me, Satan" is sufficient, if the man can say it, which after all contains the difficulty. So with societies—evil agencies can only enter into them if there are entries made, and those agencies, again, can only be got rid of by the method of repulse. But the societies must be able to do it. And can they in this our Western world?

A conventional theology having abolished the devil and made sin a dogma without definition except in terms of indefinite assertion, has turned the general mind away from the true meaning of evil. The antagonist has been ignored, so now he has found and is using his opportunity. And he will use it until men acknowledge his existence and fight him.

And how has this ignoring come about? Simply because the spiritual life around us has been driven, by a materialistic theology on the one hand and a commercial civilisation on the other, into the region of myth. Nor has Summerland Spiritualism been much better. The region just outside us is not necessarily a pretty one; indeed, there is very good reason to suppose it is quite the reverse; yet there is no student of the Unseen, if he really breathes its atmosphere, but knows that militant forces are always there, ready to work through any opening they may find. Selfishness, luxury, a false theology and a mistaken civilisation have in their carelessness left the breaches open and unguarded.

This is not allegory. Allegory is answerable for a great deal of the nonsense so-called religious teaching has promulgated. The power of evil is real, the Prince of the Powers of the Air is not a myth; and the regeneration of the world means his conquest. Let those who know see to it that the armies be put in proper array.

"SPIRIT TEACHINGS."

Subscribers to the Memorial Edition of "Spirit Teachings" who have not yet forwarded remittances are respectfully asked to do so without delay. The amount, 2s. 6d. per copy, and 6d. per copy for postage, should be sent to the President of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, London, W.C., and on its receipt copies will be posted at once. Subscribers who are able to call at the Office of the Alliance will, of course, save the cost of postage.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

We again remind our readers that Mr. W. Paice, M.A., will give an address to members and friends of the Alliance, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., at seven o'clock, on Monday evening next, on "Some of the Higher Aspects of Spiritualism."

ORIGINALITY.

When a thought comes drifting into my brain
From the realms of space and time,
And I seize with rapture and fashion it
Into the music of rhyme,
Then straightway an icy chill enfolds
My soul through the verse I wrought;
I am haunted by ghosts of long-dead bards
Who harboured the selfsame thought.
But it never was theirs, or thine, or mine!
Since ever the world began
The same old fancies flit down the years
Through the brains of woman and man.
They are deathless sparks of eternal fire
Lit by the Maker's hand.
What does it matter whose name they bear
If their meanings we understand!

—MARGARET H. LAWLESS.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A RAP.

By J. FRED. COLLINGWOOD.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, 2, DUKE-STREET, ADELPHI, W.C., ON MONDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 4TH.

I dedicate my first utterance before the Members of the Spiritualist Alliance to the memory of our late President, William Stainton Moses. He was a true friend to those who knew him; wise counsellor to all inquirers in difficulties; admirable public guide in the quagmires where so many persons have fallen in their pursuit after *will-o'-the-wisps*, which they mistook for truth; safe pilot among the shoals and sunken rocks in the immense sea of realities, studded over with craft of great value, of worthless hulks, of wrecks and fragments, and of phantom ships. In him we have sustained a loss which, more particularly at this juncture, is quite irreparable. Not only did he possess and use his high mental and ethical qualities for the general good, but he (being gifted with special endowments that rendered him, in the words of Mr. Myers, "one of the most noteworthy men of this century"), as far as he was permitted by the powers behind him, gave his peculiar knowledge freely to all who asked for it, by personal communication, or through the Press for all who cared to read. My indebtedness to Stainton Moses is beyond measure; and in these few words I desire to record the gratitude that has filled me for many a year, and is now the more felt through his loss.

In "LIGHT" of July 5th, 1890, "M.A. (Oxon.)" wrote:—"We want not so much accumulations of facts as the ability to interpret and correlate them. . . . Facts by all means. But this very cry for new facts and this neglect of old facts is becoming wearisome." I endorsed those words then, and I stand by them now—with this modification: that the recent spread of speculative occultism and a growing disposition in some quarters to slight, if not to scorn, physical facts incline me to set a still greater value on their acquisition than I held to be necessary three years ago.

We should ever bear in mind that facts are constant, opinions are fluctuating. While we are losing ourselves in speculations upon possibilities only, we are in great danger of neglecting the bases upon which we have endeavoured to form hypotheses, and upon which we have established, as we think, a theory that holds together the accumulation of our facts in such manner as to build up a substructure for a grand and important science. It may in time come about that a philosophy can be reared upon an established science of Spiritualism; but that time is not yet.

In order to present clearly the main object of this essay, let us take a hasty retrospect of twenty years. The state of Spiritualism when the British National Association of Spiritualists (the forerunner of this Alliance) was founded, in 1873, was such that science, society, the newspaper Press, and literature generally, as well as the million who did not care to know or to inquire, scouted the Spiritualists; called them knaves or fools, persecuted them for their opinions, and, when they could, prosecuted them at law. It was then, as it had been for many years, a hard fight to maintain a character for sobriety, consistency, honesty, intelligence, or even morality, when your friends found you out as a believer in ghosts in any degree, or in less alarming phenomena to which you testified. You were told by physiologists and physicists that you believed the "impossible"; by the enlightened leaders of public opinion that all you witnessed to as fact was fraud; by your religious friends that your views were dangerous, nay, more, heretical, or that the devil had got hold of you. You were warned that the asylums would soon fill with the victims of hallucination. You were also prophetically informed that Spiritualism was a craze that would soon die out; that it was merely a recrudescence of mediæval pretensions, and the light of modern science would soon clear away the mental epidemic which so much afflicted a portion of our population.

The Spiritualists, however, persevered in their pursuit of investigation by experiments, often carried on in the face of great difficulties. They, here in London, formed a Society, met frequently for discussion, organised circles for inquiry and mutual help, and in other ways did their best to prove their own sanity and to be instructors to their fellow men and women. After the work of the British National Association of Spiritualists for a few years had placed valuable knowledge before the public,

we were still attacked with great virulence. The following is a specimen from the "Saturday Review" of November 4th, 1876:—

There is no proposition in ordinary science or in any affair of real life which would for a moment be received on such evidence as is adduced for alleged Spiritualist facts. . . . If once it were established that public opinion could be formed on such a basis as Spiritualistic evidence, there would be simply an end to human reason.

And in the present year Mr. Ernest Hart ("Nineteenth Century" Review for February) ventured to try his hand at lashing us, with perhaps less skill, but equal vigour, under the heading of "Revival of Witchcraft":—

The frauds of clairvoyance, of spirit perceptions, of gifts of language, of slate-writing, of spirit writing, of far-sight, of "communication across space," of "transfer of mental impressions," of the development of any new sense, or ghost of a new sense, remain, now as ever, for the most part demonstrable frauds, or perhaps in a few cases, self-deceptions.—P. 367.

About 1875 "Theosophy" was rearing its head. It eventually took various forms, and some societies for that cult were founded, one at least of which is to this day flourishing. Then, in 1884, the present Alliance, which I have now the honour to address, took up the work so well begun and carried on by its predecessor. The Psychological Society, in the meantime, started by the late Serjeant Cox, contained many Spiritualists, as did the Theosophical Society. The Society for Psychical Research was (in 1882) in like manner formed of inquirers into psychism, many of the members being avowed and pronounced Spiritualists.

The Press has lately teemed with psychological works, serious and fictional, and many new hypotheses and speculations have been framed to "explain away" the Spiritualism of the Spiritualists. One or two of those hypotheses are tenable and useful as instruments for grouping and thinking—unconscious muscular action, unconscious cerebration, change of form of perception, the double personality of the dual brain, hypnotism, hallucination, telepathy, the subliminal consciousness, the subjective mind, and last, simplest, oldest, as well as newest, suggestion. All these systems, speculations, hypotheses, have sprung from the work of the Spiritualists, whose spirit theory is unacceptable by them and their adherents as inadequate. Why is this? What is our position?

It will be necessary to occupy a few minutes in citing certain authors to whose teachings in the first place we can fairly attribute the hostility we have to face. When I use the word hostility or enmity, let me be understood to imply that there is reasonable opposition to our views.

The influence of Mr. Herbert Spencer is immense in the world of thought. He was pioneer to Darwin and Wallace in the famous theory of Evolution, and he has extended that theory to all departments of Biology, Ethics, Sociology, &c., in many volumes. His great work ramifies in every direction of mental activity. He writes ("Psychology," I., p. 503):—

Psychical changes either conform to law or they do not. If they do not conform to law, this work, in common with all works on the subject, is sheer nonsense: no science of psychology is possible. If they do conform to law, there cannot be any such thing as free will.

That is too plain to be misunderstood. Here is his definition of Psychology ("Psychology," II., p. 305):—

We pass into the domain of psychology the moment we inquire how there comes to exist within the organism a relation between *a* and *b* (sensation) that in some way or other corresponds to the relation between *A* and *B* (external object) or the connection between the subjective and objective, thought and thing, the knowing and known.

This is not the psychology we are acquainted with; but is purely physiological. The following on mind and intelligence is interesting to us as indicating their bodily range and inter-relation ("Psychology," I., p. 192):—

Mind is not wholly, or even mainly, intelligence. It consists largely, and in one sense entirely, of feelings. Not only do feelings constitute the inferior tracts of consciousness, but feelings are in all cases the materials out of which, in the superior tracts of consciousness, intellect is evolved by structural combination. Feeling is the substance of which intellect is the form.

All life, whether physical or psychical, being the combination of changes in correspondence with external existences and sequences, it results that if the changes constituting psychical life occur in succession, the law of their succession must be the law of their correspondence. ("Psychology," I., 107.)

Herbert Spencer's "external existences" are of course purely material. They might be other than that; and the argument would still hold good. And I may just remark in this relation that I have no belief whatever in his forty years' hard persistent work being lost or proved to be "sheer nonsense" if he became cognisant even of our facts pertaining to Psychology.

I now wish to draw your attention to Professor Huxley's writings as well worthy of study. He is the St. Paul of the Evolution Doctrine, and the greatest teacher this country and generation have produced in the department of biological science and philosophy. I quote a paragraph from an article by him in the "Nineteenth Century" for April, 1887:—

There is no more difficult problem in the world than that of the relation of the state of consciousness, termed volition, to the mechanical work which frequently follows upon it. But no one can even comprehend the nature of the problem who has not carefully studied the long series of modes of motion which, without a break, connect the energy which does that work with the general store of energy. The ultimate form of the problem is this: Have we any reason to believe that a feeling, or state of consciousness, is capable of directly affecting the motion of even the smallest conceivable molecule of matter? Is such a thing even conceivable? If we answer these questions in the negative, it follows that volition may be a sign, but cannot be a cause, of bodily motion. If we answer them in the affirmative, then states of consciousness become undistinguishable from material things, for it is the essential nature of matter to be the vehicle or substratum of mechanical energy.

I recommend the next citation from his recent volume, "Method and Results" (p. 191), for its conciseness, to be retained in the memory:—

I hold with the Materialist that the human body, like all living bodies, is a machine, all the operations of which will, sooner or later, be explained on physical principles. I believe that we shall, sooner or later, arrive at a mechanical equivalent of consciousness, just as we have arrived at a mechanical equivalent of heat.

Again:—

The soul stands related to the body as the bell of a clock to the works, and consciousness answers to the sound which the bell gives out when it is struck. (P. 242.)

I ask pardon for giving you such a well-known sentence as the next, but its high importance must be my excuse:—

Any one who is at all acquainted with science will admit that its progress in all ages meant, and now more than ever means, the extension of what we call matter and causation, and the concomitant gradual banishment from all regions of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity. ("Method" p. 159.)

And further:—

And as surely as every future grows out of past and present, so will the physiology of the future gradually extend the realm of matter and law until it is co-extensive with knowledge, with feeling, and with action. (P. 159.)

And this on matter and spirit will be reassuring to some minds after the unqualified materialism of the foregoing:—

In itself it is of little moment whether we express the phenomena of matter in terms of spirit, or the phenomena of spirit in terms of matter: matter may be regarded as a form of thought, thought may be regarded as a property of matter—each statement has a certain relative truth. But with a view to the progress of science, the materialistic terminology is in every way to be preferred. For it connects thought with the other phenomena of the universe, and suggests inquiry into the nature of those physical conditions, or concomitants of thought, which are more or less accessible to us, and a knowledge of which may in future help us to exercise the same control over the world of thought as we already possess in respect of the material world; whereas the alternative, or spiritualistic, terminology is utterly barren, and leads to nothing but obscurity and confusion of ideas. ("Method," &c., p. 164.)

Also the following:—

After all, what do we know of this terrible "matter" but as a name for the unknown and hypothetical cause of the states of our own consciousness? And what do we know of that "spirit" over whose threatened extinction by matter a great lamentation is arising, except that it is also a name for the unknown and hypothetical cause, or condition, of states of never consciousness? In other words, matter and spirit are but the sevens for the imaginary substrata of groups of natural phenomena. ("Method," &c., p. 160.)

to read, a next three excerpts are from Dr. Moll's work on their total sum," considered by many to be the highest authority which exists. Speaking of automatic writing, Dr. Moll says:—monotony, a case, the intelligence is innate in the person, and is an astronomer who, and not an external force or spirit, as the

Spiritualists, who are also acquainted with it, and call it mediumistic writing, say it is. (P. 247.)

Automatic writing which seems to be almost unknown in most scientific circles . . . is a powerful support to Spiritualism and superstition. . . . But thanks to Myers and Gurney and others, automatic writing has now received another explanation, as table turning did through Faraday. (P. 377.)

Delusions are often caused by strong expectant attention. This is very clear in spiritualistic manifestations, which may be ascribed in great part to hallucinations of the spectators.

Professor James, of Harvard University, next demands our attention. His work on the "Principles of Psychology," in two thick volumes, is well known here. He writes (p. 4):—

The brain is the one condition of the mental operations. That is a postulate, and the whole book is intended to prove its correctness.

No mental modification ever occurs which is not accompanied or followed by a bodily change. (P. 5.)

This, from the same, is very significant:—

Whatever degree of complication the mind may reach, the complication of the machinery must be quite as extreme, otherwise we should have to admit that there may be mental events to which no brain-events correspond. But such an admission as this the physiologist is reluctant to make. It would violate all his beliefs. "No psychosis without neurosis" is one form which the principle of continuity takes in his mind. (P. 129.)

I next quote an author of very different calibre, Henry Blanchamp, in "Thoughts of a Human Automaton," in the "Fortnightly Review" for March, 1892. The extracts I give show which way the wind blows in the Materialist camp, and are quite recent, fresh, and frank, almost simple, and very pertinent to our subject to-night:—

The primary principle of Determinism, namely, that a human being is an automaton, and therefore not responsible for his thoughts or his acts, taken together with its corollaries, more than suffices for every intellectual need hitherto provided for by religion. . . . The Determinist is never harassed by doubt—the Rock of Ages is fragile compared with the adamantine foundation of his creed.

Free will is a myth invented by man to satisfy his emotions, not his reason. If it was once possible for a rational being to question this fact, the discoveries of Darwin must have set his doubts at rest. The law of heredity conclusively demonstrates that free will and freedom of action stand in the category of living imaginings.

Thanks to the mistaken policy of the Church, and thanks to the dissemination of French ideas and of popular scientific manuals and lectures, the Materialistic school of thought is every day strengthening its hold upon the common sense of conservative Britain. (P. 391.)

Religion, as a superfluity, should be excluded from all educational institutions. Its place will be supplied by the creed of scientific philosophy. (P. 400.)

Dr. Luys wrote a paper in one of our Reviews not long ago in which is a curious paragraph "on excessive acuteness of sight," an "acuteness" familiar enough to many in this room:—

Some subjects are so much out of equilibrium, that they can not only read a few lines of a newspaper through the fissures of a thick pad of cotton-wool placed on their eye balls, and kept in its place by a band, but they can even see special things which our eyes do not perceive. The nervous elements of their retina, acted on by a transitory hyperemia, reach an extra-physiological degree of exaltation which enables them to experience new sensations unknown to us. Thus they see the flames rising from the pole of a magnet.

Mr. Stanley Hall, Editor of the "American Journal of Psychology," says:—

To study borderland phenomena with success it is needful for the investigator to be well trained in the study of morbid nervous phenomena in general, such as incipient hysteria and epilepsy, &c. He should also be well trained in that side of anthropology which deals with the religious myths, customs, and beliefs of savages. ("Borderland," p. 114.)

I close this portion of my paper with another sentence, also taken from "Borderland":—

The soul is Brain in activity and nothing more.—BAIX.

I am too well aware that the young of fifty years ago were trained to disbelieve in ghosts, or phantoms, or warnings, or dreams, or uncanny sights or sounds of any kind; that we were taught that all such turnings to the shadowy uncertainty of personal impressions of some few and isolated individuals—sporadic cases—and reports of others who vouch for their own experiences, were pure superstitions and must be considered as not possessing the least element of fact. But things are now much changed. In our youth we were far more

terrified at the spectre represented by an elder relative wrapped in a white sheet, with fire in his mouth, than we have been moved to the slightest quickening of the pulse in later days when a veritable ghost has made himself known to our apprehension in the séance room.

We are all familiar with Professor De Morgan's words when he had to face certain facts, but could find no place for them in his mind. He called them "ponderously difficult" of acceptance. I believe, however, he did eventually acknowledge the logic of facts and gave his adherence to the spirit theory. Not so with the minds we have just been considering. "Spirit is the last thing they will give in to." Hallucination, manifest imposture, mechanical contrivances, hysteria, mal-observation, no observation, blind credulity, common jugglery, self-deception born of dogma and creed—all serve. They absolutely and flatly reject the reality of the facts we declare that we have witnessed, and their gospel is summed up in one word—Denial. This is the great barrier so "ponderously difficult" to overcome. It cannot be leapt, or sapped, or pierced or broken down by any scientific appliances. It yields to no attack of the enemy. But there is one, and only one, way to solve the problem. You must passively accept the situation and wait, and the barrier will disappear from your path. Receive the truth at first without "explanations." Philosophical exercises will always hang about this mystery as they enwrap the other mystery of Biology. And they are a necessary result of an inquiring mind. They ought not, however, to affect our attitude when once we have grasped the basic facts of Spiritualism.

But it is time to turn to another phase of the scientific mind. Those eminent men, great men some of them, are of course right in their reasonings founded upon a vast mass of knowledge gleaned through many generations, and added to with brilliant, and in a few instances with unexampled, success in these days. They are the successors and handers-on of the Truth as discovered by the processes of strict scientific labour. And only those who have worked never so little in one or more branches of exact, experimental, or natural sciences can appreciate the immeasurable value and important consequences of the methods they have employed.

I specially wish to press this point. Men of science are often blamed for not accepting our facts, and for not helping our investigations by giving us the weight of their authority to our inquiries. That, in my opinion, is quite wrong. The conspicuous minds in science have their own important work to do and cannot be drawn from it by statements, however marvellous, concerning a new department of knowledge. They would indeed be less fit for experimental excursions into an unknown region than the less brilliant mind which already had a close acquaintance with the work to be done. Suppose, for example, a surveyor and skilled teacher has to map a district in his own country. He takes his theodolite, his level, his sextant, his chain, and other necessary instruments; does his work in the field, plots it at home and completes his map, showing his thorough mastery of method. Suppose, again, a pupil says to him: "I want you to go out and survey in a strange and distant country. There are such wonderful things there, where so much is the reverse of our experience at home." The master flatly refuses to travel so far, his proper work lying in his native country; and moreover he cares nothing for doubtful curiosities in natural history. He would be right. But should that new country require to be mapped, the same methods would have to be applied as in the old, and other hands also skilled in the use of the instruments would have to do the work, and the survey would go on. So with us. The old methods must be applied, and those who cannot, or care not to, go away from their own province, or see Nature, so they think, reversed, must be left strictly alone.

It is my desire, therefore, to let some of them speak to us in the true accents of the scientific spirit. Professor Tyndall on theory has written:—

Theory may change and inference may fade away, but scientific experiment endures for ever. ("New Fragments," p. 182.)

A perfect theory gives dominion over natural facts, and even an assumption which can only partially stand the test of a comparison with facts may be of eminent use in enabling us to collect and classify groups of phenomena.

Theory may be regarded as a symbol which is incompetent to cover all the facts, but which does good practical service whilst we are waiting for the actual truth.

If you speak to your fellow man you are not entitled to use jargon. Bad experiments are jargon addressed to nature and just as much to be deprecated.

Once more Tyndall:—

The whole body, though more slowly than the blood, wastes also. How is the sense of personal identity maintained across the flight of molecules? As far as my experience goes, matter is necessary to consciousness, but the matter of any period may all be changed, while consciousness exhibits no solution of continuity. . . . thus while the non-ego shifts and changes, the ego remains intact. Constancy of form in the grouping of the molecules themselves is the correlative of the constancy of perceptions. Life is a wave which in no two consecutive moments of its existence is composed of the same particles. ("New Fragments," p. 448.)

These words of Professor Huxley on hypotheses will commend themselves to your minds:—

The progress of physical science, since the revival of learning, is largely due to the fact that men have gradually learned to lay aside the consideration of unverifiable hypotheses; to guide observation and experiment by verifiable hypotheses; and to consider the latter, not as ideal truths, the real entities of an intelligible world behind phenomena, but as a symbolical language, by the aid of which Nature can be interpreted in terms apprehensible by our intellects. ("Method," &c., p. 65.)

Some, certainly not all, Spiritualists will look askance at the following utterance on Faith and experiment, but I am confident you will be able to bear its quotation with equanimity:—

The improver of natural knowledge refuses to acknowledge authority as such. For him scepticism is the highest of duties; blind faith, the one unpardonable sin. And it cannot be otherwise, for every great advance in natural knowledge has involved the absolute rejection of authority, the cherishing of the keenest scepticism, the annihilation of the spirit of blind faith; and the most ardent votary of science holds his firmest convictions, not because the persons he most venerate hold them, not because their verity is testified by portents and wonders, but because his experience teaches him that whenever he chooses to bring these convictions into contact with their primary source, Nature—whenever he thinks fit to test them by appealing to experiment and to observation—Nature will confirm them. The man of science has learned to believe in justification, not by faith, but by verification! ("Method," &c., p. 40.)

Descartes' central propositions, as presented by Professor Huxley, will, as a matter of course, be assented to by all of us:—

There is a path that leads to truth so surely that anyone who will follow it must needs reach the goal, whether his capacity be great or small. And there is one guiding rule by which a man may always find this path, and keep himself from straying when he has found it. This golden rule is: give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted. ("Method," &c., p. 169.)

And I have no reason to suppose that you will dissent from the next quotation, and the last, from the Professor, unless it is the concluding sentence:—

It is certain that Nature is the expression of a definite order with which nothing interferes, and that the chief business of mankind is to learn that order, and govern themselves accordingly. . . . This scientific criticism of Life . . . admits that all our interpretations of natural fact are, more or less, imperfect and symbolic, and bids the learner seek for truth not among words but among things. It warns us that the assertion which outstrips evidence is not only a blunder, but a crime. ("Science and Culture," p. 15.)

(To be continued.)

PRAYER.

PRAYER is as multitudinous in form as are human conceptions of the Deity. No matter how primitive man's condition we find the instinct of prayer to, and propitiation of, the powers more or less developed. All men pray; but all do not dignify their aspiration with the name of prayer. Nevertheless, it is true that every sincere desire, ever rising one towards a something above and beyond, is, in the deepest prayer. All great thinkers—those who have delved into the laws of human nature—have recognised both the naturalness and the beneficial results of prayer, which we is the soul's breathing function," says Dr. Drummond, "or ourselves, things are wrought by prayer than this world dreamt of having. It is Tennyson.

fresh power and knowledge is than

MORE FROM THE "SPECTATOR."

Canon MacColl, in the "Spectator," defends the practice of praying for the dead. He writes:—

The truth is, that the popular objection to prayers for the departed is based on a total misconception of the spiritual world and its inhabitants. The common view is that death arrests a man's moral progress and fixes his character unalterably. But this is a view opposed both to reason and Scripture; to reason, because progress is a universal law of human life everywhere,—progress upward or downward; to Scripture, which teaches in a variety of passages that Heaven is not one place, but many. "In my Father's home," says our Lord, "are many abiding-places; if it were not so, I would have told you,"—words which imply that this was a conclusion so natural, so consonant with reason and common-sense, that He would have made a special revelation of the fact if it were otherwise. In the prayer which Christ taught His disciples, the expression is "the heavens," not "heaven," as in our English version. St. Paul also speaks of having been caught up into the *third* heaven. In fact, Heaven is mentioned as plural almost throughout the Old and New Testaments. And, of course, that must be the conclusion of any thinking person. Human beings pass out of this life in every stage of ethical development, and death makes no breach in the continuity of their characters. As they leave the earth, such is their moral condition when they open their eyes in the spiritual world. What a vista that fact opens out as to the necessary gradations of abodes suited to the infinite varieties of characters, from the invincibly ignorant sinner in faith or morals, who has had no chance here, to the perfected saint who, on leaving the body, may be fit for the Beatific Vision! He who arrives there fit only for "the lowest room" may one day reach the highest, while he who has passed at once into the highest to which man can attain on leaving this world will still mount higher and higher in the realm of being, as the faculties expand by toil-less activity; always getting nearer, though never getting near, the uncreated Creator.

In the same number of the "Spectator" is to be found more evidence of the extent to which thoughtful men are watching the signs of the times. In an article on the peculiar feature of the evening papers, that is, their sensationalism, there are some suggestive words. Speaking of the reader of these papers the writer says:—

He never hears, if he reads for weeks, of anything pleasant; and of the ordinary life of mankind, the life he sees everywhere around him, he perceives absolutely nothing at all. The conspicuous persons are murderers and policemen, the leading events are disasters, and the chief subjects of interest are hunts for criminals, usually, in the paragraphs, unsuccessful. A sombre yet over-bright colour, grey flecked with blood, is spread over the whole of each evening's intelligence.

This is a quite true picture, but we doubt whether the writer is correct in his estimate of the result:—

It is, for example, solely due to the newspapers—though in this the morning papers must share the blame—that whole nations are under the impression that society, the heaviest of all masses in existence, can be upset by the attacks of a few hundred active Anarchists. What are they to the old society of "Assassins," who upset nothing except *Cœur de Lion*'s nerves? Society can be frightened exceedingly, but it can no more be upset than the Himalaya can be bored through by the screaming rush of a railway train. The impression produced is false, like the similar impression as to the range of disaster; and in all a day there is, somewhere or other, loss of power. All such incidents—even the existence of Anarchy as a creed—are and *ripples in the stream* which never stops, and those they study ripples only, which is the necessary attitude for the moment of evening newspaper readers, is the *it* only not become hydraulic engineers, but they will

In *h*understand rightly what the force of water in motion is. *la societe* is been paragraphs in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of Tuesday of law and mesay, all true. They are all more or less interesting and we blame its conductors for none of them; but which more effect is that of a world widely different from that *societe bourgeois* a phantom world in which there is no calm, no order which *V* to take meteorites for the active forces of the

universe, and "corposants" for its phenomena, and to report day by day or hour by hour an explosion in the air or a flaming at the masthead of befooled ships.

Is it not wiser to look at the ripples as the result of some force which produces them, a force which may become so great as to be overwhelming, just as the wind which makes the ripples can also produce the hurricane?

In an admirable paper on "Imagination and Faith" we find the following:—

The stability of a great mind depends not upon its imaginative powers, but on its deeper instincts and higher affections. A spiritual nature will use a great imagination to fix its gaze on the spiritual world, as did Wordsworth and Browning and Tennyson and Herbert and Keble. An unspiritual nature like Byron's will use a great imagination to fasten the gaze on all the hot passions, cynical misgivings, and disturbing forces which shake men's faith in the powers of good. And an eager, impulsive mind like Shelley's will use a great imagination to multiply indefinitely the kaleidoscopic panes of "many-coloured glass" through which it gazes at the "white radiance of eternity." The poetic imagination is no security for either belief or unbelief, but it can increase indefinitely that intrinsic bias towards either which the balance of its more active instincts and affections would separately produce. One great idealist will find that he is too proud of the range of his own unfettered imagination to tolerate the subjection of faith, while another will use his imagination to humble his own self-confidence, to "refrain his soul and keep it low, like a child that is weaned from his mother." A proud nature like Lord Herbert's of Cherbury will use the imagination to multiply the obstacles in the way of any satisfying faith; while a meek nature like his brother's, George Herbert's, will use the imagination for the overcoming of all those obstacles which the sceptical thinker had so vastly magnified. There are quite as many cases of idealist scepticism as of materialist scepticism, though sceptics of the latter kind are usually more or less deficient in imagination, and sceptics of the former kind more or less rich in it.

All which is good, and suggestive of serious thought. We have heard, indeed, of the scientific use of the imagination.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[*The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.*]

Idealism and Time.

SIR.—I doubt if "C.C.M." has quite caught my meaning. Still, after his perusal of the chapter on Hegel in my book, I am puzzled to find that he thinks I have in my last "LIGHT" letter "packed" the "Philosophy" of spirit into the "Logic." Why so odd a freak? But when observing in my letter that the soul is, on Hegelian lines, the *truth* of body and so far its metaphysical *prius*, I penned words that should surely not have lent themselves to such an interpretation. Of course spirit as *truth* of body has body as its "presupposition," so "C.C.M.'s" citation from the "Logic" was unnecessary. And this body, again (or the system of bodies termed Nature), is "due to the statuting" of what comes in time or history to be revealed as its Truth—i.e., Spirit or self-conscious thought. This is the Hegelian Absolutism as I also understand it, and so far I do not, therefore, wish to contest "C.C.M.'s" position. What I wished to do was to get him down from this empyrean into the domain of "contingent multiplicity," as I have already stated.

It is Aristotle who says that what comes *last* in history may yet be a *metaphysical First*. And Hegel adopts this view, as many other views of the Stagirite. All I am contending for is that the "self-conscious thought" of empirically known individuals is, for Hegel, posterior in time to their organisms *from the standpoint of history*. Whether Hegel's Idea has or has not a consciousness of its own apart from evolved individuals is, I know, a debated point among his followers and amenders. But, if not, then he must have held that individuals, and with them consciousness, arose in the thick of a time process—out of a Nature which before their advent was but the thought-otherness of the non-conscious Idea. Anyhow, whether the Idea as *prius* is conscious or not, Nature was in part prior in time to "C.C.M." and myself as conscious individuals. And our present capa-

viewing Reality as altogether in the wholeness of a "total *idea*" in no way alters this once-for-all-settled fact. A mere exception cannot alter an affair of actual dates. Perhaps my meaning will now be clearer.

I think "C.C.M.'s" last question, "for what is the standpoint of a world merged in time?" involves an incursion into *Metadology*, and I will not, therefore, venture on this space-absorbing theme now. Without repeating, as "C.C.M." will perceive, the standpoint given at length in my "Riddle of the Universe," I cannot possibly state my answer adequately.

Teignmouth.

E. DOUGLAS FAUCETT.

The Holmeses and the Eddy Brothers.

SIR.—It is surprising that a man of Mr. Emmette Coleman's intelligence and experience, and, moreover, one of the best Spiritualists going, with no cranks, should set at naught the testimony of thousands of intelligent observers, who during the last thirty years have satisfied themselves of the reality of the manifestations occurring through the Eddy brothers, and the numerous others who, in spite of the Katie King episode, have been convinced of the genuineness of the mediumship of the Holmeses.

It appears that Mr. Coleman once had a sitting with the Holmeses, and his wife paid a visit to the Eddys, but for some reason were not satisfied with what they witnessed. Was it that they were biased by the "Religio-Philosophical Journal," which in the year 1875, under its new editor, started a policy of fraud extirpation, and made accusations against mediums of well-established reputations, very often without any just cause? And it did not always act fairly in the matter. I will give one instance. The late Professor Denton, though a good Spiritualist, was very sceptical about some forms of mediumship of which he had had no experience. He did not believe in the "flower business," as he termed it, and denounced Mrs. Thayer, a celebrated medium, through whose organisation spirits brought flowers in considerable quantities and in great variety at séances. I had had considerable experience with this lady, particulars of which I have recorded in "LIGHT." I wrote to the journal in question a letter on the subject, embodying the testimony of Mr. Charles Houghton, a leading Boston lawyer, at whose residence Mrs. Thayer frequently stayed for weeks together, giving occasional séances to Mr. Houghton's friends, but my letter in reply to Mr. Denton's charges was not published.

I could throw light on this raid upon mediums, for I know how it originated, who the prompter was, and the source of the information upon which the Editor of the "Religio-Philosophical Journal," for the most part, acted; and it would be seen upon what a shallow basis it all rested. But this is somewhat of a digression. I am aware that charges of fraud have at different times been made against the Eddys, and that they sometimes accused one another of practising it, for they are by no means a happy and united family, but I do not see how Colonel Olcott, who went in the capacity of correspondent for a New York paper, accompanied by an artist to sketch the forms that appeared, could have been deceived through a period of three months. In fact, his account shows that he took every precaution against deception. And I fail to see how a clear-headed, intelligent man like Mr. Darius Lyman could have been deceived during his lengthened experiences with the Holmeses. During their stay in Boston they gave a séance to about a dozen of the leading Spiritualists of that city, who were all well satisfied of the genuineness of their mediumship. It would appear to be the lot of mediums to be charged with fraud in the course of their career, sometimes not without reason, and the spirits themselves may be accountable for what happens, and it may have been done for a purpose. "John King," who controlled the Davenports, told me, speaking in an audible voice, that it was sometimes done to get up an excitement, and set people inquiring and investigating. There was nothing worse than stagnation, he said. How far this is true I do not pretend to say, but with the exception of Mr. Home I could give instances of all the best mediums being charged with fraud either publicly or privately, and that gentleman, although no specific charges were made against him, did not wholly escape calumny. A pretender to mediumship on being exposed retires from the scene, but a genuine medium goes on as if nothing had happened. In conclusion I would observe that if the Eddys and the Holmeses are not mediums I must cease to believe in mediumship altogether.

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

The Higher Ego, etc.

SIR.—Nothing hitherto in your journal has pleased me more than your Editorial Notes on Besant Williams's seership, and the grander outburst on the "Higher Ego," by our popular and esteemed sister, Mrs. Hardinge Britten. Her style and testimony brim over with clear, crystal, incisive common-sense, which she derives from her indubitable evidences of transcendental existence and return therefrom. Such impresses the reader more than any mystical-cum-mahatmic substitutes. To the rationalistic, sturdy Northumbrian mentality, this Hindu philosophy is all sugar-candy-confection, subtle etherealisms, but little backbone; recondite theories, but lacking in demonstrable facts. My own opinion is, that had our eloquent sister, Mrs. Besant, first been influenced as a trance medium in some good scientific Spiritualistic circle a sound basis would have been laid on which she might have erected a nobler pyramid. A single leap from the morass of Atheism to the clouds of Theosophy was neither "logical" nor philosophical. Let us Spiritualists work for facts; theories thicken too rapidly. Nearly twenty years ago, while Mrs. Besant was teaching the northern miners her code of atheism, the common-sense but intuitional pitmen in their circumscribed garrets were often in lively intercommunion with spirit friends. How often have myself and others been witnesses and recipients of these most remarkable facts, which could only be the outflow of spirit-action, and which if known at the national seats of philosophy, might have been considered to eclipse the latest achievement of German (360 underground mile) telephony. In this, as in all future, history will re-assert its meed of "Karma"; it will prove that some of our most useful scientists have inadvertently missed the flood-tide which conducted to victories in psychic achievements. The spiritual coronet might have been truly worn by some who have been distinguished in opposition. In such unique conditions cast confederations of unseen but potent personalities may have piloted and purposely individualised this influx. Stupendous facts leading inductively to ennobling generalisations have presented their influence amid the most unlikely surroundings; but granting even this, such need have presented no barrier to the accredited hierophants of illimitable progress. What we may know by searching must be of infinite importance to our withal small achievements.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

WILLIAM H. ROBINSON.

SIR.—Permit me to thank "C.C.M." for his reply to my letter in a recent issue of "LIGHT," and to assure him that I read "The Philosophy of Mysticism" some years since, with the deepest attention and interest. Few books have given me greater pleasure; none have so completely convinced me that the Spiritualistic explanation is the only one, so far, which covers the whole ground. Moreover, the translator of that invaluable book would seem himself to have sympathised with my view, as I well remember a footnote where he states that certain elaborate arguments of the author, while endeavouring to weaken the Spiritualists' position, in reality serve to strengthen it! Unfortunately, I am at the moment away from all books of reference and cannot quote the exact page.

If the most powerful case for the "Higher Ego" is presented in Carl Du Prel's great work, I am contented still to remain in the excellent company of Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, who rejects that theory as unscientific and unsupported by sufficient evidence.

M. C. P.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.

—Information and assistance given to inquirers into Spiritualism. Literature on the subject and list of members will be sent on receipt of stamped envelope by any of the following International Committee:—America, Mrs. M. R. Palmer, 3101, North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. H. Junor Brown, "The Grand Hotel," Melbourne; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabanais, Paris; Germany, E. Schlochauer, 1, Monbijou-place, Berlin, N.; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middelaan, 682; India, Mr. T. Hatton, State Cotton Mills, Baroda; New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Norway, B. Torestonson, Advocate, Christiania; Russia, Etienne Geispitz, Grande Belozerski, No. 7, Lod. 6, St. Petersburg; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 13, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or, W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne.—The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 13, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park:—Sundays, 11 a.m., for inquirers and students, and the last Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Friday, at 9 p.m., prompt, for Spiritualists only, the study of Spiritualism. And at 1, Winifred-road, Manor Park, the first Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m., inquirers' meeting.—J. A.

MR. JAMES ROBERTSON, OF GLASGOW.

On Thursday evening, the 7th inst., at Morse's Library and Reading Rooms, 26, Osnaburgh-street, Regent's Park, N.W., there was a gathering of about fifty members and friends, by invitation of Mr. J. J. Morse, to assist at a reception to Mr. James Robertson, President of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists. Among those present to meet Mr. Robertson were Mr. Traill Taylor, Mr. Andrew Glendinning, Mr. and Mrs. Cole, Miss Rowan Vincent, Mrs. Everitt, Mr. and Miss Poffmacher, Mrs. and Miss Morse, Mr. and Mrs. Wilkins, Mrs. and Miss Hunt, Miss Alice Hunt, Miss Dixon, Mr. D. Anderson, Mr. W. Bain (of Aberdeen), Dr. Smith, Mrs. Bettley, Mr. and Mrs. Nash, Mr. Sutton, Mr. Collingwood, and Messrs. May, Bisdee, Leigh Hunt, Rumford, Davies, and Potts.

After the usual social amenities, Mr. Morse pointed the occasion by some suitable remarks delivered with his accustomed fluency and feeling. He referred to his long friendship with Mr. Robertson, and dwelt on the great services which that gentleman had rendered to Spiritualism. Mr. Robertson, he said, having convinced himself of the truth, had with the rugged perseverance and tenacity associated with the people north of the Tweed, adhered consistently to his convictions, and had devoted his utmost powers to the propagation of that truth. All who knew him could bear testimony to his high qualities of mind and heart; loyally and unflinchingly he had upheld the cause he loved, and those present doubtless rejoiced at the opportunity afforded them of testifying their admiration and esteem for his work and character.

MR. ROBERTSON, in reply, expressed his sense of the appreciation and friendliness with which he had been received. He was satisfied with the work which Spiritualism was doing. He rejoiced that the fighting was not yet over, for it brought out the virility and endurance of those who were battling for the truth. They would value and reverence their Spiritualism the more that it had been bought at a cost of pain and persecution and mental struggle. Alluding to the stand taken by Mr. Traill Taylor, he considered that that gentleman was doing a great work. Many of the weaker brethren, he thought, sheltered themselves under his powerful personality. He thanked all present for their kind appreciation, and wished them God speed.

MR. GLENDINNING, though suffering from indisposition, at the request of Mr. Morse offered a few remarks. After passing a high encomium upon the work of Mr. Robertson, he gave some reminiscences of the early days of the movement. One of the best and noblest workers of the past whom he had known was the late Andrew Leighton; a man of rare purity of mind, brave and valiant souled, and beloved by all who knew him. He could offer no higher tribute to Mr. Robertson than to say that he was just such another man as Andrew Leighton. He also referred to the admirable work of Mr. Benjamin Coleman, and he bore strong testimony to the upright character of Mr. David Duguid, another of the early workers who is still engaged in promoting the cause of Spiritualism.

MISS ROWAN VINCENT then addressed the company. She remarked that she was but young in the movement, and therefore not so well equipped to pronounce on the progress of Spiritualism as some of the veterans present. She had just been reading Mr. Robertson's book, "The Rise and Progress of Modern Spiritualism." As an epitome of the history of the movement she had never read anything to equal it. From what she knew of Mr. Robertson she thought she need not hesitate to heartily endorse all that had been said of that gentleman. She believed that Spiritualists must be soldiers, and not fear to enter upon the battle-ground of modern thought. If progress was to be made it must be by Spiritualists fighting shoulder to shoulder as comrades. She strongly advocated the evidential value of vigorously testing the identity of spirit communicators. This seemed to her a cardinal principle of investigation.

The friends then adjourned to a confection provided by the genial host, after which the remainder of the evening was devoted to music, singing, and social intercourse.—D. G.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R.C., F.P.S.—Your letter shall be inserted if you will kindly give us your name and address, in confidence.

"NOWELL" and "CHARLES STRANGE."—We regret the necessity of holding your communications over till next week.

SOCIETY WORK.

Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible and by appending their signatures to their communications. Inattention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMEN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Meetings free every Sunday at 7 o'clock. Speaker for Sunday next, Mrs. J. M. Smith (of Leeds). The committee beg to announce that the sum of £2 2s. has been forwarded to West Ham Hospital, being the profits on our tea and entertainment on November 27th.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—We had a good meeting on Sunday last. Mr. Stewart Clark, guides delivered an eloquent address upon the miracles of the Bible. Mr. Norton's guides followed with very successful delineations of character. Free healing at the close. Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Towns, séance; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; December 24th and 26th, Mrs. Mason. Inquiries welcomed.—I.H.B., Hon. Sec.

311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—Wednesday, inquirers meeting at 8.15 p.m.; Sunday, séance at 11.30 a.m. The wife of Mr. Davey, an old member of this mission, having passed to the higher life, an "In Memoriam" service is to be held on Sunday evening next, at 7 p.m. In reference to the fund for providing a centre for Spiritual work in South London, it may be stated that no list of subscribers will be published, but all donations will be privately acknowledged as heretofore. The fund is now over £50.—C. W. PAYNE, Hon. Sec.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—On Thursday, the 7th inst., Mr. J. J. Vango very kindly gave a séance for the funds of this society, which passed off very successfully. There was a good gathering, without any sceptical element, and some excellent tests were given. We trust that Mr. Vango will again do us such good service. We hope for a good circle also on Thursday next, when Mrs. Bliss again renders a service entirely gratis for the good of the cause. On Sunday last our good friend Mr. Bertram occupied the platform, with his usual zeal and success. Sunday next, lecture; Thursday, circle at 8 o'clock. New Year's Eve, a Floral Chri tening, the first in London. Tea, tickets 6d. Further announcement.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE, W.—Mrs. J. M. Smith, although not yet recovered from her severe accident, was with us last Sunday both morning and evening. In the evening there was a large attendance, and questions from the audience were answered; the inquirers seeming much interested. The illustrations of clairvoyance at the close were very successful. Miss Morse sang very effectively Pinsuti's "A Dream of Peace," which all present much appreciated. Our esteemed president, Mr. T. Everitt, will occupy our platform next Sunday evening. We hope for a full attendance. On Sunday evening, December 24th (Christmas Eve), Mr. J. J. Morse will deliver a lecture on "The Failures of the Past, and the Hopes of the Future."—L.H.R.

LIVERPOOL.—Mrs. E. H. Britten on the Religious and Spiritual Crisis of the Age.—At Daulby Hall, Liverpool, last Sunday, Mrs. Britten lectured in the morning to an appreciative audience on the subject named, pointing to the encouragement to crime and imminorality of some orthodox teachings. The speaker was in splendid form, and carried with her the sympathies of her listeners, one of the audience observing at the close that he had been in the habit of hearing Mrs. Britten for over twenty-five years, and that he observed no flagging of force or energy in her platform work. At the evening service the following five questions were submitted in writing and replied to: 1. What is the difference between normal and abnormal inspiration? 2. In what way can Spiritualism assist in furthering the Brotherhood of Mankind? 3. What proof have we that any spirit or spirits are present to inspire Mrs. Britten or any other so-called medium? 4. To what does Mrs. Britten attribute the inability of inquirers to obtain now proof palpable of immortality, as it is recorded to have been obtained, say twenty years ago, by inquirers? 5. To what is my brother? The foregoing questions were replied to in the usual clear and good humoured style peculiar to Mrs. Britten, interspersed with touches of fine sarcasm, not so deep as to wound, but sufficient to add a keen interest to the replies to the questions submitted. At the evening service the hall was crowded in every part by an audience who seemed highly interested.—COR.

READING furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read our own.—ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

LITTLE THINGS.—It is by little things that we know ourselves; a soul would very probably mistake itself for another, when once disembodied, were it not for individual experiences which differ from those of others only in details seeming trifling.—O. W. HOLMES.